

## REMARKS

### Information Disclosure Statement

Submitted herewith is an Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) under 37 C.F.R. 1.97(b). The Applicants respectfully request acknowledgement of the references cited in the Information Disclosure Statement.

### Regarding Amendments

In the specification, a "Cross Reference to Related Applications" section has been updated to remove attorney docket numbers for related applications. These corrections are of a clerical nature and do not add "new matter".

### Claim Status

Claims 1-19 are now pending.

Claims 1-19 stand allowed. The Examiner is thanked for the kind allowance of claims 1-19.

No "new matter" has been added by this Amendment.

The drawings are being replaced with formal drawings, submitted herewith.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully asserted that the claims are now in condition for allowance.

Request for Allowance

It is believed that this Amendment places the above-identified patent application into condition for allowance. Early favorable consideration of this Amendment and allowance of this application are earnestly solicited.

Allowable Subject Matter

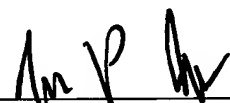
The Examiner is thanked for the kind allowance of claims 1-19. The Applicants acknowledge the Examiner's statement of reasons for allowance as set forth in the Notice of Allowance dated February 20, 2004. However, the Applicants point out that the reasons for allowability of the above referenced claims are not limited to the reasons for allowance as set forth in the Office Action, and that additional reasons for allowability may exist, each of which may be independently sufficient to establish the patentability of one or more pending claims.

The Applicants respectfully reserve the right to introduce, articulate, or otherwise comment on any such additional reasons for allowance as may be appropriate in any future proceedings concerning the claimed invention.

If, in the opinion of the Examiner, an interview would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,  
THELEN REID & PRIEST, LLP

Dated: May 13, 2004

  
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